SIGNS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

courtesy of Adult Protective Services

What is physical or sexual abuse?

Physical abuse may include slapping, hitting, beating, bruising, or causing someone physical pain, injury, or suffering. This also could include confining an adult against his/her will, such as locking someone in a room or tying him/her to furniture. Sexual abuse includes physical force, threats, or coercion to facilitate non-consensual touching, fondling, intercourse, or other sexual activities. This is particularly true with vulnerable adults who are unable to give consent or comprehend the nature of these actions.

What are the signs of physical or sexual abuse?

Pain on touching.
Broken eyeglasses.
Bruises, burns and broken bones.
Choke or bite marks.
Torn or bloody underclothing or bedding.
New STD or bladder/bowel problems.
Fear of speaking for oneself in the presence of another person.
Overclothing in warm weather.
Withdrawal from normal activities.
Delayed or no medical treatment of injuries.

What are some risk factors? *

Family crisis or family members are suffering from stress.
Domestic issues causing violence or conflict in the home.
Depression, unusual fears, or sudden loss of self-confidence.
Social isolation.
Loneliness.

*The presence of warning signs doesn't necessarily mean that the adult is being abused.

What if I'm not sure?

Do you just have a "feeling" about a situation but can't verify the details? APS professionals are trained to handle just such a situation. Based on your report, the agency will assess the situation and determine how best to respond. Your local APS agency can determine the best course of action in any given situation.

CONTACT APS

Reach out to Adult Protective Services if you notice signs of abuse:

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SENIOR SERVICES

- Call 1-800-392-0210.
- Visit Health.Mo.Gov/abuse or make a report online.